

ARBORICULTURAL ASSESSMENT  
&  
IMPACT REPORT

PROPOSED PART 8 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT  
OLDTOWN MILL  
CELBRIDE  
CO. KILDARE

<b>Project No.</b>	<b>Project name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Revision</b>
TCEL002	Oldtown Celbridge	12/03/23	A

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## CONTENTS

<b>1. Client brief and Methodology .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. General description of trees .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. Arboricultural impact .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.1 Development description .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.2 Impact of the development .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4 Tree Protection .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4. Limitations of survey .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5. Terminology. ....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>6. References .....</b>	<b>8</b>

### Appendices

- i Tree Condition Analysis & Preliminary Recommendations**
- ii TCEL002 101 Arboricultural Assessment & Constraints**
- ii TCEL002 102 Arboricultural Impact Rev B**
- ii TCEL002 103 Tree Protection Rev A**

## Summary

An assessment of trees and woody vegetation was undertaken as base-line information at the proposed development site at Oldtown Celbridge, Co. Kildare. A total of seventeen trees and two hedgerows (280m combined) were assessed. The trees within the central section of the site are mainly young to early mature birch and alder. Mature trees are located within the hedgerows which are primarily hawthorn.

The condition of the trees is mixed with the hedgerows becoming swamped in ivy and bindweed.

The proposed development of the site will necessitate the removal of all the centrally located early-mature trees. The 130m hedgerow on the western and southwestern boundaries will be retained with a low intervention fence placed to the site side of the hedgerow.

Planning permission for the development of the site to the north identified hedgerow on the northwestern boundary to the rear of houses to be removed.

Tree locations are shown on drawing TCEL002 101 Arboricultural Assessment & Constraints. The impact on trees and hedgerows is shown on drawing TCEL002 102 Arboricultural Impact Rev B and tree protection is shown on drawing TCEL002 103 Tree Protection Rev A.

## 1. Client brief & Methodology

CMK Hort + Arb Ltd. has prepared this report on behalf of the National Development Finance Agency (NDFA) and Kildare County Council to provide base-line data on the composition and condition of trees within an area of land at Oldtown, Celbridge, Co. Kildare. (image 1). This report outlines these findings and assesses the impact on trees of the proposed development of the site.

The fieldwork was undertaken on the 10<sup>th</sup> of October 2023.

The survey methodology, supporting drawings and documentation follow the recommendations contained within BS 5837 (2012). The analysis of the trees was undertaken using the VTA methodology as developed by Mattheck and Breloer (1994).



**Image 1.** Redline boundary outlining site location.

## 2. General description of trees

The subject site is located to the west of Oldtown Road, Celbridge (image 1) and is a much modified former agricultural field with extensive spoil dominating the central area of the site. There are a number of trees located on and near the spoil heap which are presumed to have self-seeded and developed since the site was abandoned (image 2). In addition, there are trees on the northern and southern boundaries contained within agricultural field boundaries.

The younger self-seeded trees include birch (*Betula pendula*) and grey alder (*Alnus incana*) with scrub willow (*Salix caprea*), buddleia (*Buddleia davidii*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) prevalent over much of this area. Although the alder and birch have developed well overall none are particularly high value trees due to their age. Bindweed (*Convolvulus major*) is smothering most of the ground vegetation and is also smothering the canopies of sections of the hedgerows (image 3).



**Image 2.** Typical view of site illustrating undulating ground, bindweed smothering ground vegetation with northwestern boundary hedgerow in background



**Image 3.** Bindweed smothering ground vegetation and extending into northwestern boundary hedgerow.



**Image 4.** Typical view of northwestern boundary hedgerow

The hedgerows which are primarily composed of unmanaged hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) are becoming swamped in ivy (image 4). A number of mature sycamore

(*Acer pseudoplatanus*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and more occasionally ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) form the standard element mainly located on the northern boundary. These trees are in good condition generally though ash #60 is exhibiting signs of ash dieback and the sycamore #59 located on the western boundary has developed from a failed stump which contains extensive decay.

A number of small-leaved lime cultivars located on the eastern boundary with Oldtown Road (image 5) are in good condition overall though could benefit from formative pruning and removal of the wire boundary fence which is becoming enmeshed in the trees' canopies.



**Image 5.** Small-leaved lime on northern boundary with Oldtown Road

### 3. Arboricultural Impact

#### 3.1 Development description

i. 60 no. residential units including 40 no. houses and 20 no. apartments comprising 20 no. one bed units; 15 no. two bed units; 21 no. three bed units; and 4 no. four bed units; with renewable energy design measures (which may be provided externally) for each housing unit.

ii. Rear garden sheds serving the residential units;

iii. Landscaping works including provision of (a) open space and kick about areas; (b) natural play features; and (c) new pedestrian and cycle connections;

iv. Associated site and infrastructural works including provision for (a) 2 no. ESB substations and switchrooms; (b) car and bicycle parking; (d) public lighting; (e) bin storage; (f) temporary construction signage; (g) estate signage; and (h) varied site boundary treatment comprising walls and fencing; and

v. All associated site development works, including removal of existing spoil from the site in advance of construction works.

#### 3.2 Impact of the proposed development

Planning permission for the neighbouring allowed for the removal of 115m of hedgerow under the grant of planning for the site (Planning file reference P19/1282, Condition 3(b)).

The proposed development of the site will necessitate the removal of all the centrally located early mature trees. The link road between the subject site and the site to the north will necessitate the removal of 6m of hedgerow.

The open space area and garden of the property adjoining the southern boundary will incorporate 126m of hedgerow with and additional 24m of hedgerow retained to rear of houses on the northwestern boundary.

One category C tree on the south corner of the site is not considered suitable for retention within a private rear garden and will be removed.

#### **4. Tree Protection**

Tree protection fencing is shown on drawing TCEL002 103 Rev A and should be erected following the removal of permitted vegetation and prior to the mobilisation of plant and site infrastructure.

Tree protection fencing should be retained in place until the commencement of soft landscaping works or as agreed with the project arborist.

#### **5. Limitations of Survey**

This survey should be regarded as a preliminary assessment of the trees and deals with the current condition as identified during this survey only. Every attempt was made to identify hazardous trees in this report; however, this survey was carried out from the ground and therefore cannot be held to have identified elements of decay, which may be hidden out of sight within the crown or beneath ivy or other obstructions. To counter this limitation in the survey process it is vital that during tree works any additional defects found by the climbing arborist are communicated to the consulting arborist to allow appropriate action to be taken.

The details within this survey are based on the condition of the trees during the survey period only. The findings in this survey cannot be held to be valid after any site disturbance, man-made or natural, which may have an adverse effect on any trees present.

#### **6. Terminology**

Tree categories

- A Trees of high quality and value due to their size, age, condition, historical/visual merit and/or conservation potential (a minimum of 40 years).
- A1 Mainly arboricultural values. Particularly good examples of species, essential components of groups or of formal or semi-formal arboricultural features.
- A2 Mainly landscape values. Trees, groups or woodlands which provide a definite screening or softening effects to the locality in relation to views into or out of site, or those of particular visual importance.
- A3 Mainly cultural values, including conservation. Trees, groups or woodlands of significant conservation, historical, comparative or other value (e.g. veteran trees or wood-pasture).
- B Trees of moderate quality and value (a minimum of 20 years).

## Terminology cont.

- B1 Mainly arboricultural values. Trees that might be included in high categories but are downgraded because of impaired condition (e.g. presence of remedial defects including unsympathetic past management and minor storm damage).
- B2 Mainly landscape values. Trees present in numbers, usually as groups or woodlands, such that they form distinct landscape features, thereby attracting a higher collective rating than they might as individuals, but which are not, individually, essential components of formal or semi-formal features (e.g. trees of moderate quality within an avenue that includes better A category specimens) or trees situated internally to the site, therefore individually having little visual impact on the wider locality.
- B3 Mainly cultural values including conservation. Trees with clearly identifiable conservation or other cultural benefits.
- C Trees of low quality and value (a minimum of 10 years).
- C1 Not qualifying in higher categories.
- C2 Trees present in groups or woodlands but without conferring on them greater landscape value and/or trees offering low or only temporary screening benefit.
- C3 Trees with very limited conservation or other cultural benefits.
- U Trees in such condition that any existing value would be lost within 10 years and which should, in the current context, be removed for reasons of sound arboricultural management. Trees that are dead, dying or showing immediate and irreversible decline.

Comments: Refers to the tree's condition and suitability for the site.

Common name: Most widely used non-botanical name.

Co-dominant: Two branches assuming the role of leading shoots. When growing close together may form a weak attachment (included bark) at their point of contact. Trees with this defect may be in danger of splitting at this weak attachment.

Crown Spread: Measured in meters north, south, east and west.

Decay fungi: Refers to those species of fungi which degrade living wood and which may, depending on the degree of degradation, render the tree structurally unsound.

Defects: Refers to cracks, storm damage and any other damage mechanical or biological.

Diameter: Diameter of the trunk (millimetres) at 1.5m. M.S. after the measurement refers to the tree being multi-stemmed.

Genus & Species: Refers to the botanical names for the tree.

Height: Measured in meters.



## Terminology cont.

**Monitor:** Refers to trees which need to be re-surveyed on a yearly basis to assess their condition. This timescale may be sooner where works or adverse weather conditions have impacted negatively on the trees.

**Overhaul:** A reference to standard tree surgery work which consists of the removal of deadwood, crossing branches and balancing where appropriate.

**Recommendations:** Indicates surgery work necessary for the retention or, where necessary, removal of the tree.

**Tree No.** Refers to numbered tag fixed to tree during survey.

## 7. References

BS 5837 (2012). Trees in Relation to Design Demolition and Construction

Mattheck and Breloer (1994). The body language of trees

## APPENDIX I. TREE CONDITION ANALYSIS AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Tag number	Species	Age Class	Vigour	Comments	Preliminary Recommendations	Category	Long-term potential (years)	Dbh mm	Height m	Spread m N, E, S, W
53	Italian alder Alnus incana	Mature	Good	Well developed specimen with no visible defects	No action necessary	B2	40	280	12.5	4,4,4,4
54	Italian alder Alnus incana	Early Mature	Good	Three-stemmed from base. Wide unions between stems. Canopy well developed with no visible defects.	No action necessary	B2	40	220	6	2,2,2,2
55	Italian alder Alnus incana	Early Mature	Good	Twin stemmed from base with a tight union and bark contact between stems. Canopy well developed with no visible defects.	No action necessary	B2	40	220	10.5	3,2,2,2
56	Small leaved lime cultivar Tilia cordata cv	Young	Good	A relatively well developed specimen though tight unions at canopy formation which may become structurally problematic in the future. Removal of congested stems would arguably reduce long term potential	No action necessary	B2	20-30	180	5.5	3,3,3,3

Tag number	Species	Age Class	Vigour	Comments	Preliminary Recommendations	Category	Long-term potential (years)	Dbh mm	Height m	Spread m N, E, S, W
57	Sycamore Acer pseudoplatanus	Young	Good	A multi stemmed specimen at base of boundary wall with potential to undermine wall in future.	Fell	U	<10	220	5	3,3,3,3
58	Sycamore Acer pseudoplatanus	Mature	Good	A multi stemmed specimen formed from a 0.75m stump. There is decay in central area of stump presumably at point of failure. Re-growths strongly vertical.	Monitor decay	C2	15-20	750	10	4,4,4,4
59	Birch Betula pendula	Young	Good	A well-developed specimen with no visible defects	No action necessary	B2	30-40	200	8	2,2,2,2
60	Ash Fraxinus excelsior	Mature	Fair	Multi stemmed and becoming swamped in ivy. Canopy exhibiting signs of early stage ash dieback.	Monitor ash dieback. Cut ivy	C2	Oct-15	750	15	5,5,5,5
60	Beech Fagus sylvatica	Mature	Good	Trunk kinked to east becoming vertical from 3m. Canopy suppressed toward to north due to competition from neighbouring trees. Dead stump in lower canopy.	Remove stump from base	B2	40	490	18	3,7,7,5

Tag number	Species	Age Class	Vigour	Comments	Preliminary Recommendations	Category	Long-term potential (years)	Dbh mm	Height m	Spread m N, E, S, W
61	Beech Fagus sylvatica	Mature	Good	A well-developed specimen on western boundary. Very strong ivy growth up trunk obscuring view for assessment.	No action necessary	A2	40	440	18	7,7,7,8
62	Sycamore Acer pseudoplatanus	Mature	Good	Located on a raised mound on western boundary. Trunk three stemmed from 0.5m with tight unions between stems. Very strong ivy growth up stems obscuring view for assessment. Canopy suppressed toward north due to competition from neighbouring trees.	Cut ivy and re-assess	B2	30-40	750	17	1,6,6,5
63	Sycamore Acer pseudoplatanus	Mature	Good	Located on raised mound on western boundary. Multi stemmed from base with wide unions between stems. Suppressed dead hawthorn at base. Strong ivy growth up stems. No visible defects.	No action necessary	B2	40	820	17	6,6,4,5

Tag number	Species	Age Class	Vigour	Comments	Preliminary Recommendations	Category	Long-term potential (years)	Dbh mm	Height m	Spread m N, E, S, W
64	Italian alder Alnus incana	Young	Good	A relatively well developed multi stemmed specimen. No visible defects	No action necessary	B2	30-40	200	5	2,2,2,2
65	Small leaved lime cultivar Tilia cordata cv	Young	Good	A well-developed specimen within a laurel hedge. No visible defects	No action necessary	B2	40	190	6	3,3,3,3
66	Small leaved lime cultivar Tilia cordata cv	Young	Good	A well-developed specimen within a laurel hedge. No visible defects	Undertake formative pruning and cut back hedge	B2	40	160	5.25	3,3,3,3
68	Small leaved lime cultivar Tilia cordata cv	Young	Good	A well-developed specimen within a laurel hedge	Undertake formative pruning and cut back hedge	B2	40	120	4.5	2,2,2,2
69	Small leaved lime cultivar Tilia cordata cv	Young	Good	A well-developed specimen within a laurel hedge. Branched to north growing into fence. Minor crown congestion present	Undertake formative pruning and remove fence or branches into fence	B2	40	130	4	2,2,2,2